

MARVEL

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CONTINUING A 6-PART SAGA...

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

PART **5**

"THUNDER"

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BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY





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A woman of rare breeding... true nobility... and a tender heart.

Driven out of Russia by the Trotskys and Lenins.

Driven to America where she was overwhelmed by the poverty. The filth. The utter mundanity of life here.

Finally locked away, like an animal: trapped. Abused. Terrified.

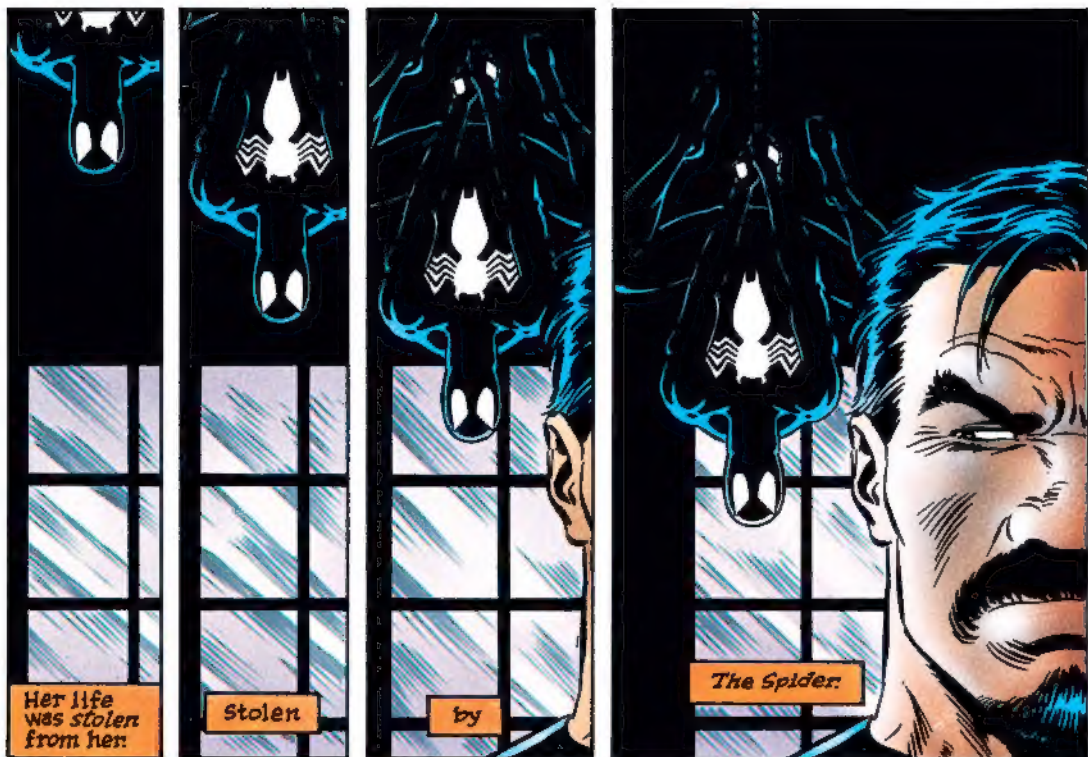
KRA-KOOOON



And my father, his spirit broken, allowed it.

And I, just a child, could only watch—as helpless as she was.

They said my mother was insane; that she took her own life. *They lied.*

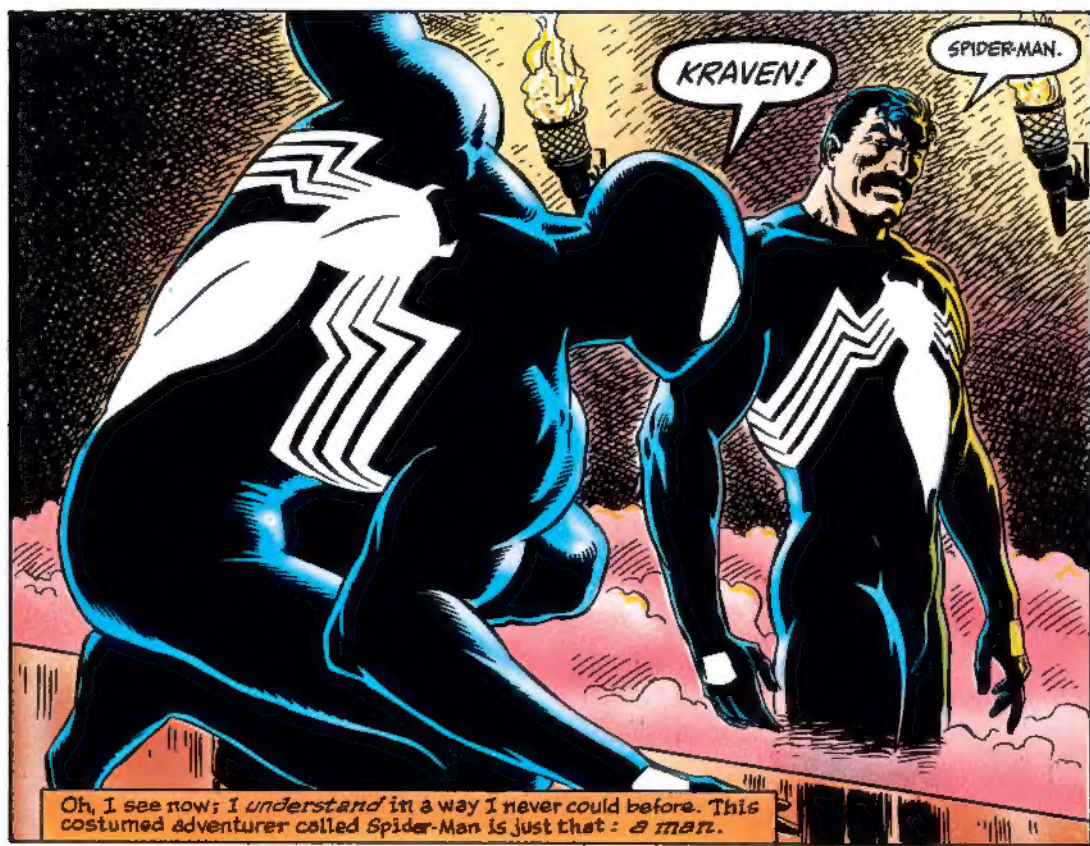


Her life
was stolen
from her

Stolen

by

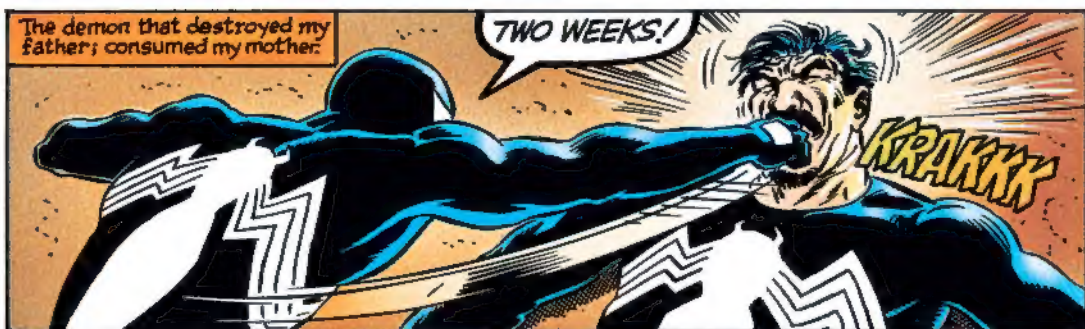
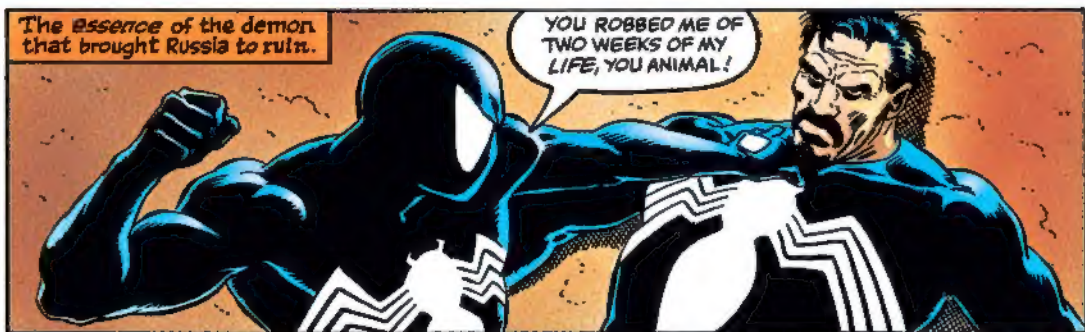
The Spider.



KRAVEN!

SPIDER-MAN.

Oh, I see now; I *understand* in a way I never could before. This costumed adventurer called Spider-Man is just that : *a man*.







The man is confused--but The Spider comprehends. I feel his awe...his reverence. His--

-- submission.

But it is part of the dance, part of the plan, for the man to comprehend as well.

So I'll show him the Truth. And, when we finally share it--

-- we'll both be free.

FOLLOW ME, SPIDER-MAN.

YOU EXPECT ME TO JUST--?!

YOU HAVE SPECIAL SENSES THAT WARN YOU OF DANGER-- SO YOU KNOW THAT THERE'S NO TRAP WAITING BELOW.

COME WITH ME.

He hesitates.

He comes.

What else CAN he do?

How calm I feel; how peaceful. As if something inside me-- some knot, some tangle of fear and anger and so much more-- has been finally untied.

All these years: fleeing Russia, suffocating in America, finding release... finding honor... in the jungle. All these years-- and I've never known peace or calm or that elusive thing called happiness.

But I feel as if I can know it now. That it's nearby. Just outside, perhaps-- hidden in the patter of the rain, the drum-beat of the thunder.

Peace, calm, happiness.
An ending.

Soon.

VERMIN?!

YES, YOUR
OLD FOE
VERMIN.

THE NEWSPAPERS HAVE
BEEN CALLING HIM "THE
CANNIBAL KILLER."

BUT WE KNOW
WHAT HE REALLY
IS, DON'T WE? THE
PERFECT FUSION OF
MAN AND ANIMAL. A
VILE, TORMENTED,
BEAUTIFUL
BEAST--

SHAKKKKK





--THAT I HAVE
BEATEN--

--AND
CAPTURED.

I.

SHAKKKK



I COULD FEEL HIM
OUT THERE, SPIDER-MAN...
I COULD TOUCH HIS SOUL--
AND I KNEW WHAT ROLE
HE HAD TO PLAY IN OUR
LITTLE GAME.

OUT... OUT...
PLEASSSSSSSE
LET ME OUT!



HE WAS THE FINAL TEST.
THE FINAL PROOF.

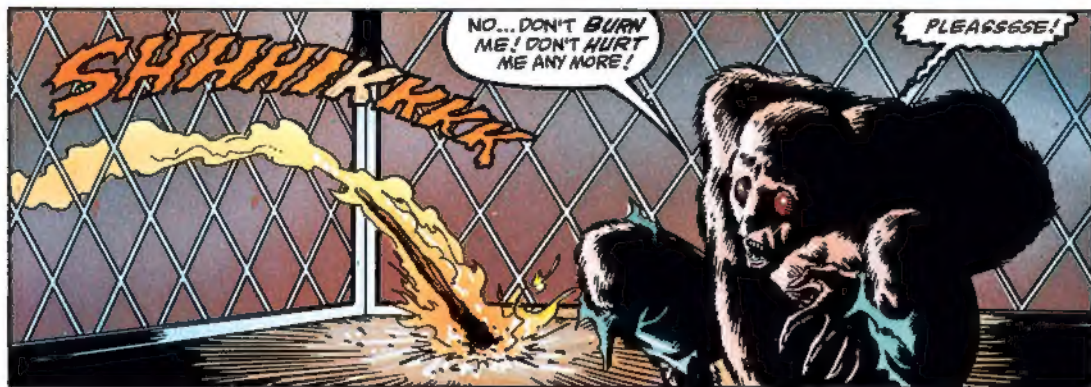
YOU WERE UNABLE
TO DEFEAT HIM ALONE.
YOU AND CAPTAIN AMERICA
COULD BARELY DO IT
TOGETHER. BUT I
DEFEATED HIM.



LOOK AT HIM--
A WHIMPERING,
TERRIFIED,
PATHETIC LITTLE
MOUSE.



AND
I
DID
IT.



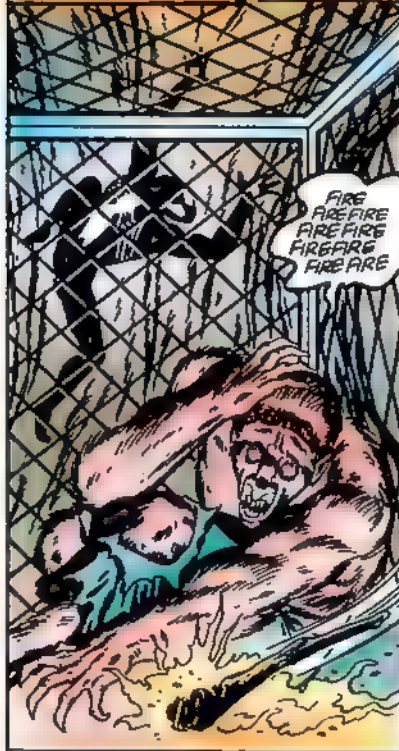
SHAKKKK

NO...DON'T BURN
ME! DON'T HURT
ME ANY MORE!

PLEASSSE!

Crawling upward :
The man filled
with compassion for
the cowering beast--

-- the Spider
delighting in
Vermin's
torment.

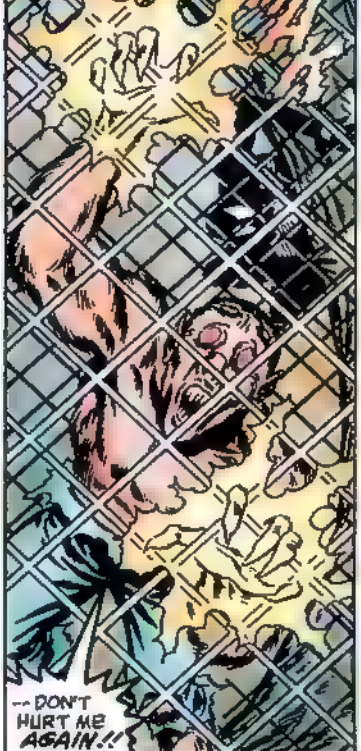


But, of course, all Vermin
knows is that Spider-Man
hunted... defeated...
captured... humiliated him--

-- and the
very sight
of that
black
costume
those white
eyes--



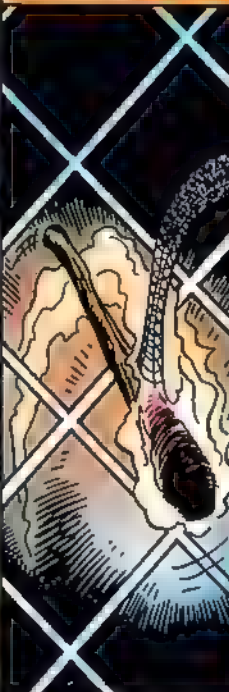
--drives the
little mouse
wild.



So the man behind
the mask does what
he can to alleviate
the mouse's pain--



-- then skitters back
down the wall--



--turning his rage
upon me.



It was in the jungles that I first began to understand the ways of the spirits and demons...of the ravenous Spider.



And tonight I finally see that even the man inhabited the Spider--

-- is ignorant--

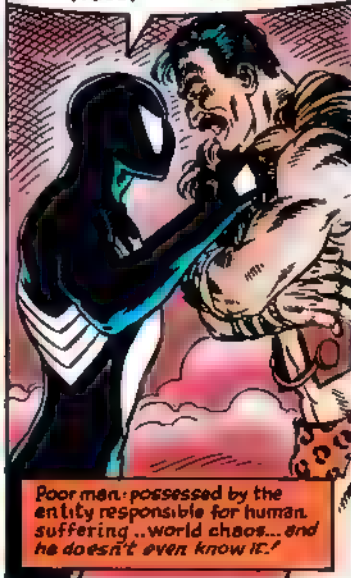
KRAVEN!



-- of its devious ways!

I HAVE HAD IT WITH YOU, DO YOU HEAR ME? YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST TURN MY LIFE INSIDE OUT--

-- AND THEN STAND THERE GRINNING LIKE SOME BRAIN-DAMAGED GORILLA? WELL, YOU CANT!



Poor man: possessed by the entity responsible for human suffering...world chaos...and he doesn't even know it!

I was as naïve once... before I left this corrupted excuse for civilization behind.

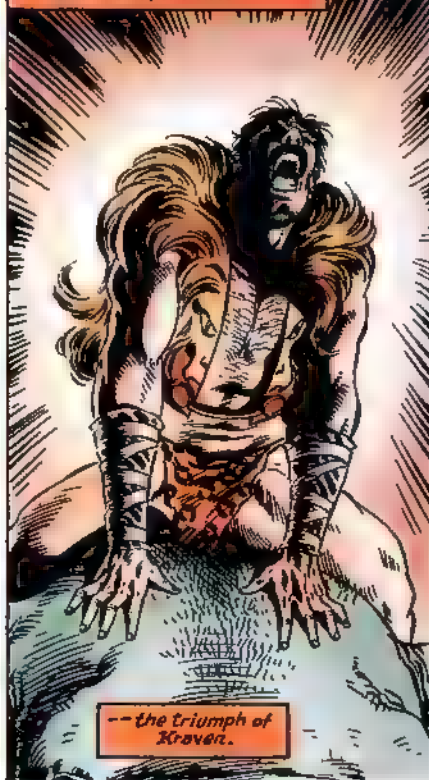
Before I found the honor and dignity I'd lost when my country... my parents... fell to The Spider--



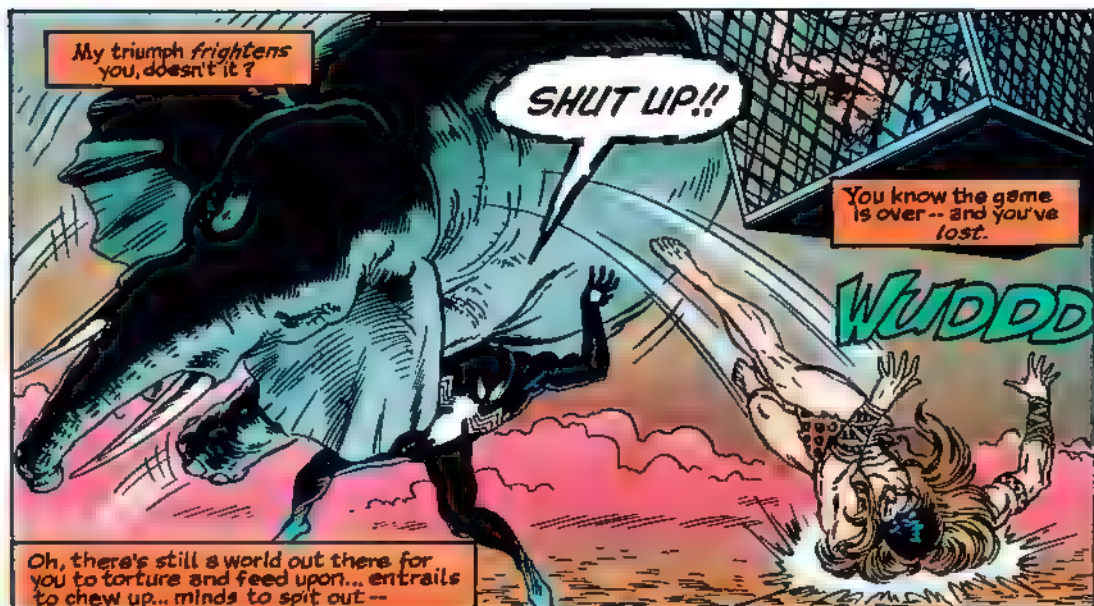
-- in the primitive wilds of Africa.

Hear me, Spider; hear me, man:

Hear the bellow of the elephant; the roar of the lion --



-- the triumph of Kraven.



My triumph frightens
you, doesn't it?

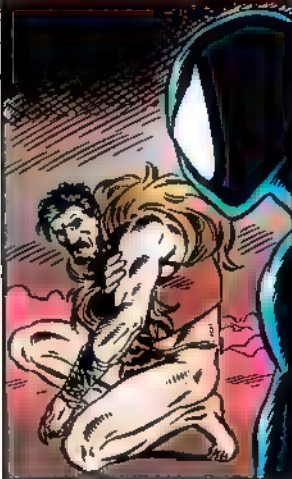
SHUT UP!!

You know the game
is over-- and you've
lost.

WUDDDD

Oh, there's still a world out there for
you to torture and feed upon... entrails
to chew up... minds to spit out--

-- but you know that you
no longer have **KRAVEN**
in your power--and that
not only scares you--it
saddens you.



And, in some strange,
inexplicable way--



-- it saddens me, too.



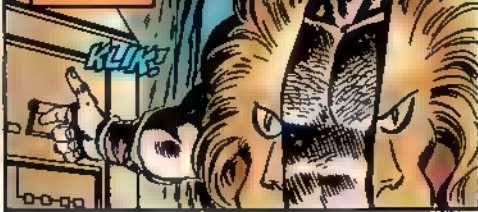
You recoil. Why?

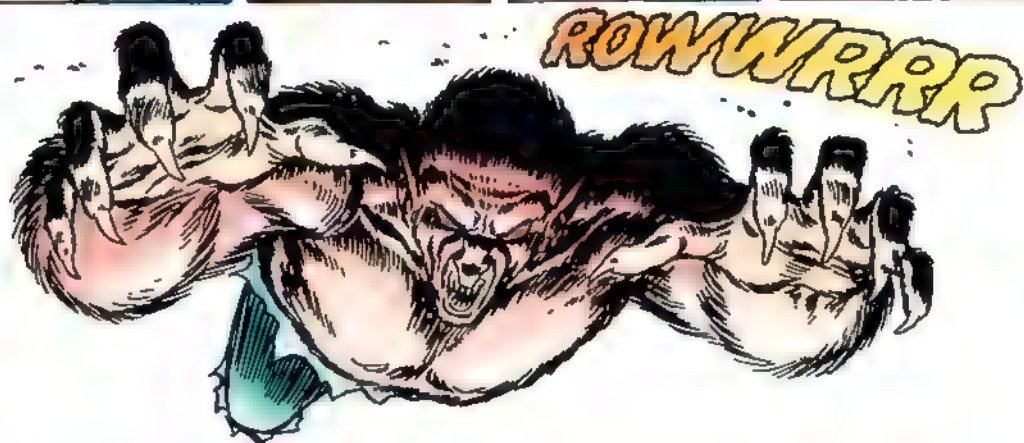
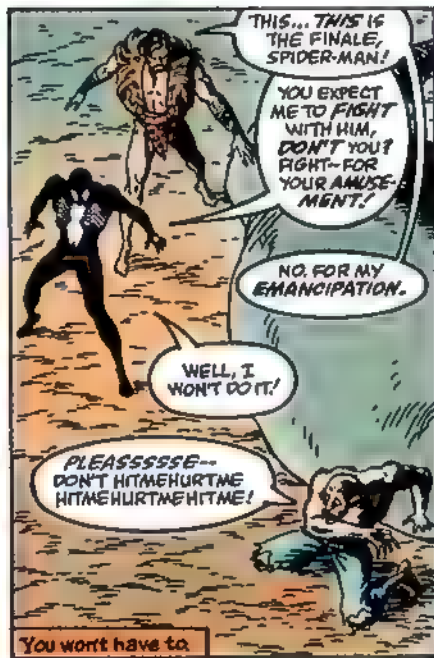
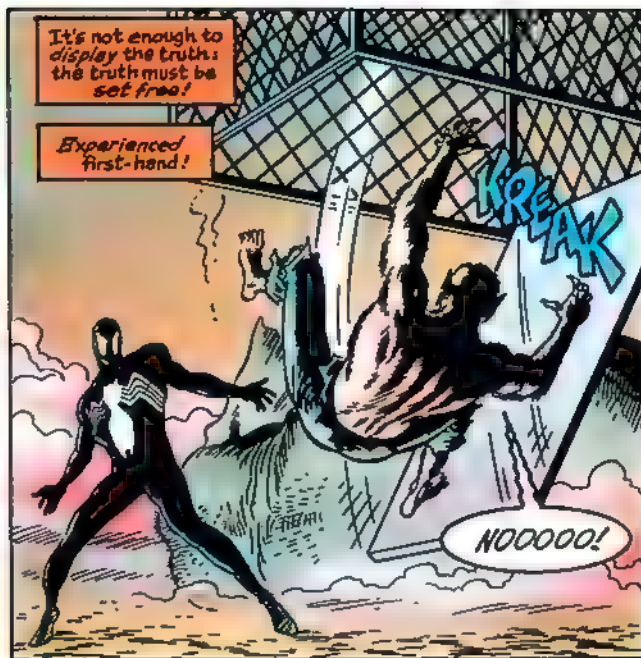
Does my affection
embarrass you?

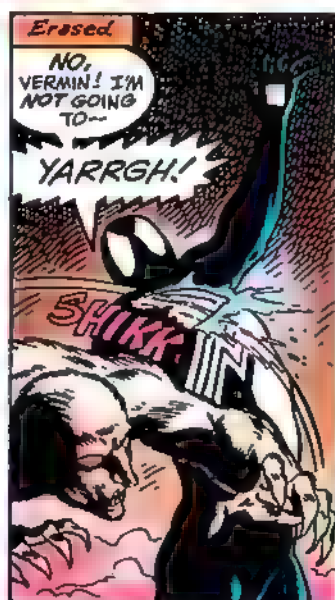
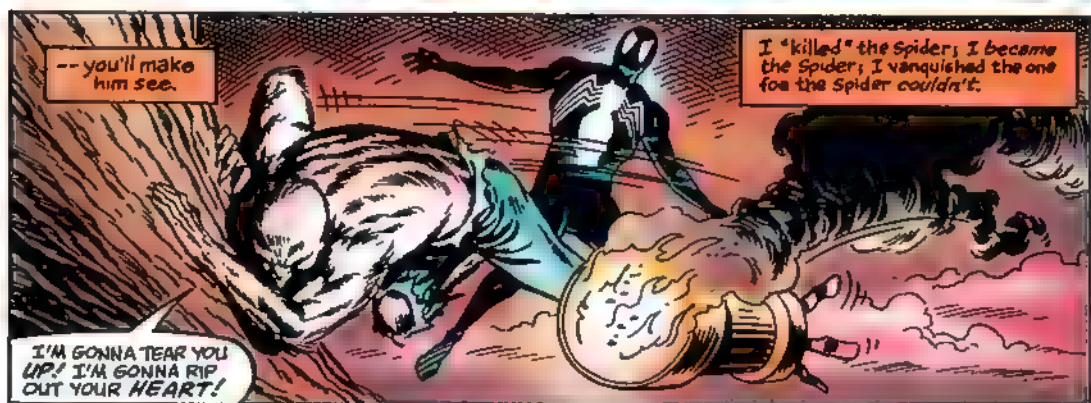
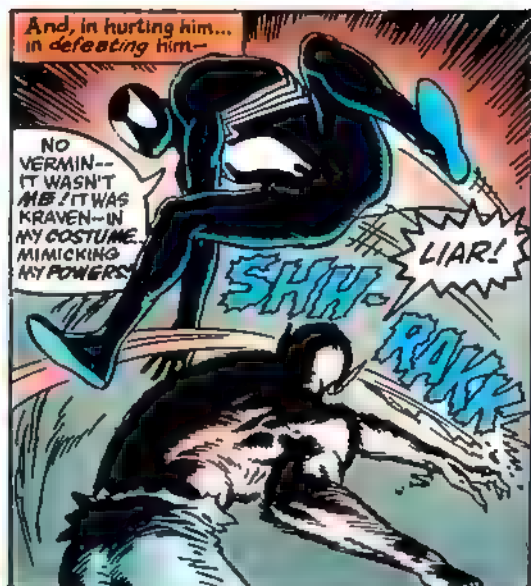


No. It's not that. It's
just that the game
ISN'T quite done.

Not yet.







How odd I suddenly feel.



How unutterably tired.



The game was a good one; man to Spider... Spider to man--



-- but it was so very, very long.



THAT'S THE WAY IT'S GONNA BE!!



KRA-

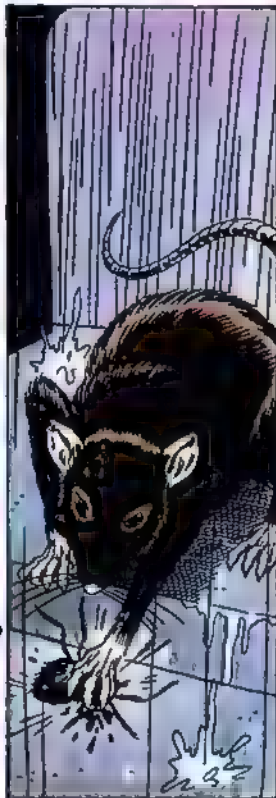
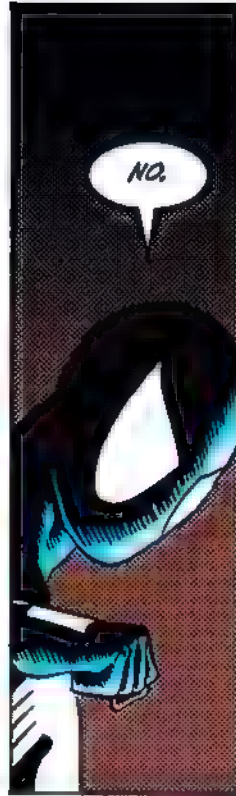
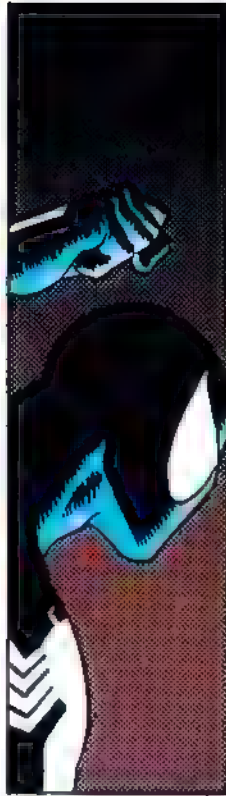
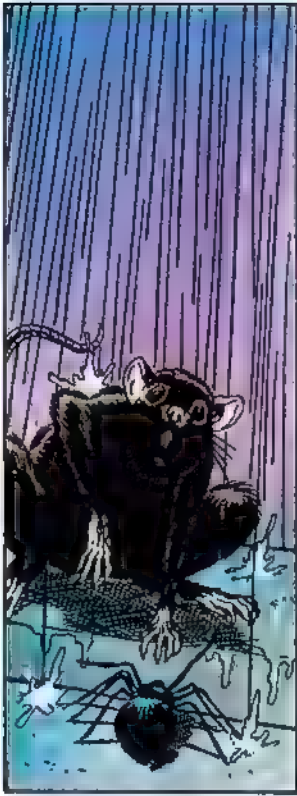
KRA-

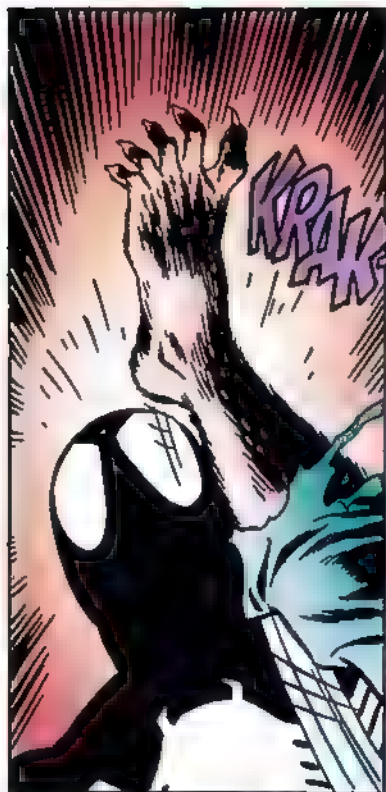
They said my mother --

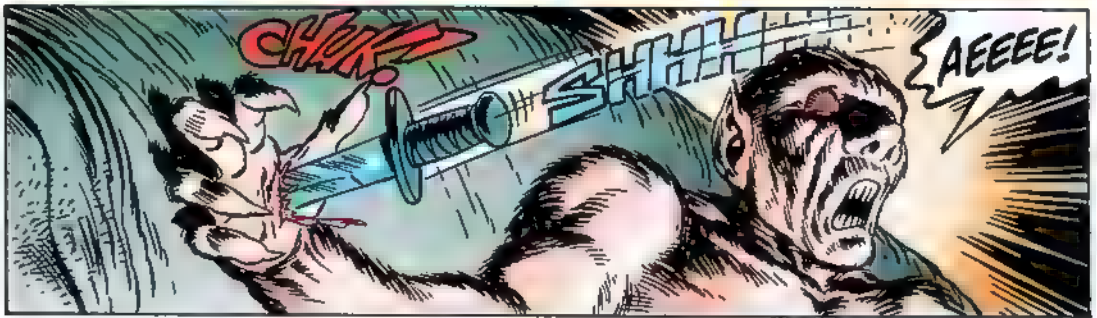
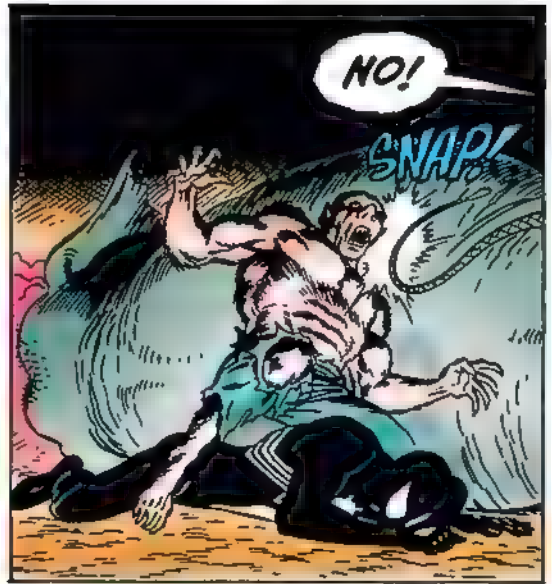
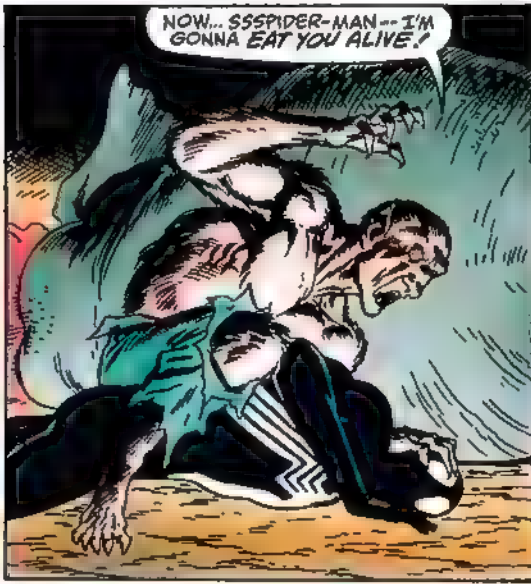
HE SHOT ME... HE BURIED ME! BURIED ME!

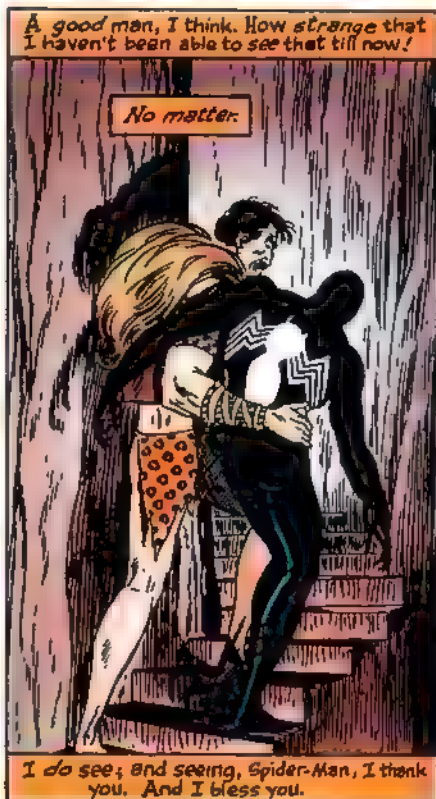
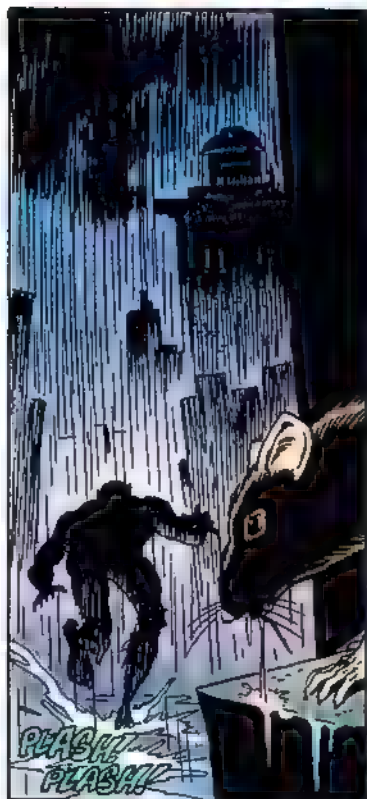
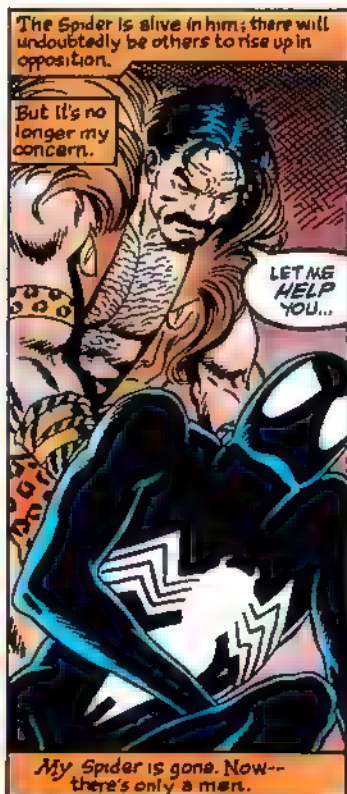
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT'S LIKE, YOU STUPID, DISGUSTING ANIMAL!











And there's one final thing I see; something I don't think I was capable of seeing till now: every man has his Spider. And perhaps I--



YOU'RE FREE. GO.

JUST LIKE THAT? GO?

AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE, DO YOU THINK I'M REALLY GONNA--

A MAN LIKE YOU WON'T LET VERMIN RUN LOOSE. GO. FOLLOW YOUR CONSCIENCE.

-- I have been YOURS.

GO--WHILE YOU GO MERRILY ALONG...HUNTING...RUINING LIVES...USING PEOPLE TO--



AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, YOU SURELY KNOW THAT I'M A MAN OF MY WORD--



-- AND I GIVE YOU MY WORD: FROM THIS NIGHT FORWARD, KRAVEN THE HUNTER--



-- WILL NEVER HUNT AGAIN.

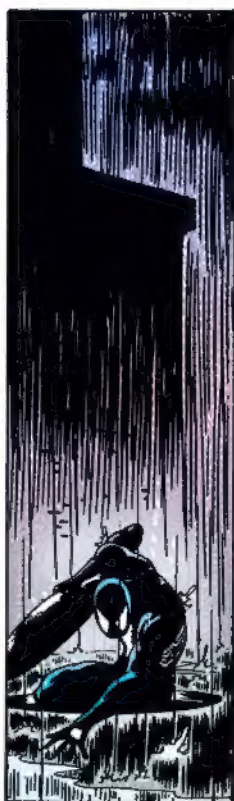


I'LL BE BACK!

I don't doubt it.

Every man... every woman... every nation... every Age has its Spider. You have been mine. What a burden. What an--





How calm I feel; how peaceful. As if some-thing inside me-- some knot, some tangle of fear and anger and so much more, has been finally untied.



All these years: fleeing Russia, suffocating in America, finding release... finding honor... in the jungle. All these years-- and I've never known peace or calm or that elusive thing called happiness.



But I feel as if I can know it now. That it's nearby. Just outside, perhaps--hidden in the patter of the rain, the drum-beat of the thunder.



Peace, calm, happiness. An ending.





They said
my mother
was
insane.

